(d) and (e) Search and Seizure actions are carried out all over the country as per the provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961. These operations are a continuous process based on credible information regarding tax evasion.

Merger of Anyonya Bank with Saraswat Bank

489. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal of merger of Anyonya Bank with the Saraswat Bank of Mumbai is pending with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI);

(b) if so, the status of the proposal; and

(c) the details of the safeguards being taken for protecting the interest of about thirty thousand shareholders and seventy five thousand deposits of these banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The proposal for merger of the Anyonya Co-operative Bank Ltd., Vadodara with the Saraswat Co-operative Bank Ltd., Mumbai has been received by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and is being examined by them.

(c) The details of safeguards taken by RBI to protect the interests of shareholders and depositors are detailed as under:

(i) Directions under Section 35 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (AACS) have been imposed on the bank from the close of business on September 14, 2007 to prevent preferential payments and alienation of assets.

(ii) Each depositor in a bank is insured up to a maximum of Rs. 1,00,000 (Rupees one lakh only) by DICGC for both principal and interest held by him in the same right and capacity as on the date of liquidation, under the Deposit Insurance Scheme.

(iii) Further, Memorandum of Understanding has been entered by Reserve Bank of India with the State Government. A Task Force for Co-operative Urban Banks (TAFCUB) has been constituted in the State comprising of representatives from RBI, RCS and Urban Co-operative Bank Federations for identification and drawing up of a time bound action plan for the revival of potentially viable UCBs. The financial position of the bank is reviewed and discussed in the meetings of the TAFCUB periodically and supervisory action as recommended by it is taken.

Tax exemption for A.P. State Sports Development Fund

490. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh had requested the Centre for 100 per cent income tax exemption to Andhra Pradesh State Sports Development Fund; and

(b) if so, the response of the Centre in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable.

However, in Question No. 2377 dated 23.12.2008 by the Hon'ble Member Shri Nandi Yellaiah wherein it was asked that whether a request had been received for 100 per cent income tax exemption under sub section 2(iii) of clause (a) of the Section 80G of the Income Tax Act to the Andhra Pradesh Sports Development Fund and its latest status, it was replied by the Hon'ble Minister of State for Finance that the request was examined and not found acceptable.

Sixth pay commission benefits for Physiotherapists

491. SHRI MANGALA KISAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that physiotherapists have been kept below in comparison to para-veterinary and nursing scales and have been clubbed with paramedical and had been given a mere replacement scale by the sixth Pay Commission;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial steps taken to give physiotherapists rational and upgraded scale?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Physiotherapists are part of the common category of Para/Medical staff and as such, Sixth Pay Commission has treated them as a part of this common category. Sixth Pay Commission has granted normal replacement scales to most categories of posts, including Physiotherapists. However, pay scales of certain categories like Nurses have been upgraded as a result of conscious recommendations given by the Commission on account of arduous nature of their duties and to ensure better delivery mechanisms for the citizens. In the case of some categories of Para Veterinarians, Pay Commission has granted upgraded pay scales.

(c) Since the revised pay scales of all these categories are based on the specific recommendations of the Pay Commission, no change is called for.

Problems of farmers of Maharashtra

†492. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 3392 given in the Rajya Sabha on 4th August and state:

(a) whether a task force has been established to solve the problems of those farmers of Maharashtra who borrow loans from private money lenders and who are not covered under loan relief scheme;

(b) if so, the findings of the investigation made by this task force;

(c) the future action proposed by the task force and the status of implementation thereof; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.